

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 11387 301909Z

47

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 11387

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SUBJ: FORNMIN'S COMMENTS ON US-LA RELATIONS

REF BOGOTA 11379

1. IN OUR PRIVATE LUNCHEON CONVERSATION (REFTEL) FORNMIN SPOKE AT LENGTH ON VARIOUS ASPECTS OF US-LA RELATIONS IN AN ALMOST STREAM-OF-CONSCIOUSNESS FLOW, WHICH, I BELIEVE, REFLECTED SOME DEEP FEELINGS AND OPINIONS ON HIS PART. HE MADE THE FOL POINTS:

A) OBVIOUSLY THE "THIRD WORLD" WAS CHALLENGING THE DEVELOPED WORLD REGARDING TERMS OF TRADE, ECONOMIC BALANCE OF POWER AND THE "RULES OF THE GAME". IT WAS ABLE TO DO SO BECAUSE OF THE CHANGE IN PATTERNS OF CONTROL OF STRATEGIC COMMODITIES, I.E. OIL, AND THE PROLIFERATION IN NUMBERS OF DEVELOPING NATIONS, I.E. AFRICA.

B) THIS SITUATION INVITED LA NATIONS, LIKE VENEZUELA, TO SEEK LEADERSHIP IN THIS NEW PATTERN OF INTER-NATIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES. THIS IN TURN REFLECTED AN EROSION IN LA CONFIDENCE IN THE US. IN PAST YEARS THE US-LA AXIS WHICH OPERATED IN INTERNATIONAL FORA, CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 11387 301909Z

SUCH AS THE UN, PROVIDED A CERTAIN STABILITY. TO SOME DEGREE

THIS LOST ITS EFFECTIVENESS BECAUSE OF THE PROLIFERATION OF THE AFRO-ASIAN BLOC WHICH MEANT THE LA VOTES WERE NOT AS IMPORTANT; BUT TO SOME DEGREE ALSO THE COORDINATION AND UNITY OF THE US-LA VIEW OF THINGS HAS ERODED. NOW LA NATIONS VOTE WITH THE AFRICANS AS MUCH AS WITH THE US.

C) IN SHORT, THE LA PERCEPTION OF THE US AS A FRIEND TO BE SUPPORTED AND TO COOPERATE WITH HAS DETERIORATED, AND THEREFORE THE INFLUENCE OF THE US HAS DECLINED. HE, FOR ONE, FELT THAT THAT WAS AN ADVERSE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE HEMISPHERE'S PEACE AND STABILITY. HE FAVORED STRONG US PARTICIPATION AND LEVEL OF INFLUENCE IN LA, AND THAT THEREFORE ONE OF THE US PRIME POLIT GOALS OUGHT TO BE THE REFURBISHMENT OF ITS IMAGE AND RECEPTIVITY IN LA EYES.

D) THE US COULD ACCOMPLISH MUCH MORE IN THIS SENSE BY "POLITICAL ACTS" THAN BY ALL OF THE ECONOMIC MEASURES CURRENTLY BEING DISCUSSED. BY POLIT ACTS HE MEANT SOME BOLD MOVE TO ASSERT POLIT LEADERSHIP, AND HE CITED FDR'S INITIATIVES IN PUBLIC ESPOUSAL OF NON-INTERVENTION AND WITHDRAWAL OF MARINES. IF, HE SAID, THE US WERE TO TAKE THE LEAD ON THE CUBAN ISSUE, IT WOULD DO MORE FOR THE "NEW DIALOGUE" THAN ANYTHING ELSE.

E) UNLESS SOME SUCH POLIT AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ACT IS TAKEN THE "NEW DIALOGUE" WILL FOUNDER. THE ECONOMIC ISSUES ARE IMPORTANT BUT BUT THEY ARE ALSO TECH, INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES AND CONTRADICTIONS IN INTERESTS ARE INEVITABLE, AND THERE IS NOW NO OVERALL FRAMEWORK IN WHICH TO RELATE THESE DIFFERENCES OR WORK OUT FORMULAE.

F) COLOMBIA HAS ALWAYS CONSIDERED ITSELF A LOYAL FRIEND OF THE US. COLOMBIA HAS ALWAYS ACTED PRUDENTLY AND WITH THE DESIRE TO MAINTAIN STRONG TIES WITH THE US. IT HAS REALLY NEVER GIVEN US PROBLEMS, AS HAVE OTHERS. IT ALSO SHARES OUR POLIT SET OF VALUES. IT WAS THIS BACKGROUND THAT MADE THE US POSITION AT QUITO SUCH A BLOW, I.E. THAT WE WOULD LEAVE COLOMBIA HANGING.

G) PROBLEMS OF US IMAGE ARE SUBTLE BUT REAL. FOR EXAMPLE, HE SAID, THE PRESS STORIES FROM WASHINGTON AS TO THE FACT THAT THE SECY WILL VISIT ONLY CERTAIN FEW COUNTRIES DID NOT HELP. THEY WERE NOT FAIR EITHER TO THE US OR TO THE COUNTRIES CITED IN THE STORIES,
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 11387 301909Z

BECAUSE THEN JEALOUSIES AND IRRITATIONS ON THE PART OF THE OTHERS TURNED AGAINST BOTH. ANY VISIT BY THE SECY, HE SAID, OUGHT TO COVER A CROSS SECTION AND SAMPLE, I.E. A SMALL COUNTRY, A POWERFUL COUNTRY, A DEMOCRACY, ETC. (I MADE NO COMMENT ON THIS EXPOSITION; I AM NOT SURE WHY HE SAW FIT TO SINGLE THIS EXAMPLE OUT, UNLESS HE HAS HEARD STORIES OF THE PROPOSED ITINERARY.)

2. COMMENT. THE FORNMIN'S COMMENTS, WHILE PERSONAL, DO REFLECT

THE GENERAL VIEW OF ADMIN CIRCLES, AND PROBABLY AS WELL OF THOSE POLIT ELITE FIGURES IN BOTH PARTIES THAT CONCERN THEMSELVES WITH INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS. WHAT IS INTERESTING IS THE REFLECTION OF AN AMBIVALENCE--OF A BASIC DESIRE TO HAVE STRONG TIES AND FRIENDSHIP WITH THE US ALONG WITH CRITICISM AND SOME ANTAGONISMS TOWARD US, ALL LACED WITH AN ALMOST PUZZLED FEELING OF REBUFF AND RESENTMENT AT SEEMING TO BE DISREGARDED. IT MAY BE THAT FEW OF THESE FEELINGS ARE JUSTIFIED OR THAT THE REACTIONS ARE SUPERFICIAL; BUT WHAT IS SIGNIFICANT AND A POLITICAL REALITY IS THAT THEY EXIST AND THEY REFLECT A BASIC MIND-SET THAT IS BEING FORMED HERE AND THAT PROVIDES THE FILTER THROUGH WHICH THE US IS PERCEIVED AND ANALYZED.

3. THAT THESE VIEWS MAY BE SOMEWHAT MORE GENERAL THAN LIEVANO OR THE LOPEZ ADMIN WAS ILLUSTRATED BY A SHARPLY WRITTEN COMMENTARY IN DEC 29 EL ESPECTADOR BY FORMER FORNMIN VAZQUEZ CARRIZOSA IN WHICH HE CHARACTERIZES US-LA RELATIONS AS DETERIORATING. THIS IS A CONCLUSION HE ILLUSTRATES BY WHAT HE SEES AS LINKAGES AMONG THE VARIOUS THINGS THAT HAVE OCCURRED RECENTLY--CIA INTERVENTIONS, SECY'S ABSENCE FROM QUITO AND OUR NEUTRALITY THERE, AND THE BARNACLES WE ATTACHED TO THE TRADE BILL. THIS ARTICLE, WHICH IS WORTH READING, IS BEING POUCHED TO ARA/NC. VAKY

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